

Abstract:

The thesis is focused on the political participation of university students in the Czech Republic. This topic has not been studied there yet. The aim of the research is to find out whether university students in the Czech Republic participate in politics. To this attitude we want to find the reasons and motivation and the forms in which the participation takes place. We also want to determine how students perceive themselves from a socioeconomic point of view, on a left-right scale, or with which ideology, political party or regime they identify. Taking into account the long-term trend of TOP 09 support among youth and especially students, we will try to get a more detailed characterization of this group of citizens.

The data are obtained from 365 questionnaires structured into several thematic units at micro, meso and macro levels that correspond to the expected impact on political participation. We also deal with the relationship of students to the regime, the openness of the system to participation and its forms, internal efficiency.

The analysis showed that 95 % of the students participate in politics. The most used forms are election attendance, petition signature and participation in group action. The most common reasons and motivations are interest in the surroundings, civic duty or the expression of free will. Interest in politics is reflected by 96 % of students. Politics is mainly discussed with friends and family. We found a high degree of consensus in their opinions and attitudes. The intensity of political participation is positively influenced by the level of income, membership in organizations and contacts in political organizations. The level of income also positively influences the interest in politics, internal efficiency and perception of the system's openness to political participation. Next, identifying the left-right scale tends to the right. The majority of students, including low-income groups, tend to do so. Students are most often considered liberals, but 22 % of students have not identified any ideology. A non-democratic regime can imagine 42 % of students, especially from the upper middle class.

The supporters of the TOP 09 party, with which 42.5 % of the respondents positively identify themselves, differ from the sample by identifying on the left-right scale that is closer to the right. Furthermore, there is a higher degree of consensus with their surroundings. Conversely, the intensity and forms of participation do not differ from the rest. Surprisingly, the party has high support among lower-income people and its supporters are not fully identified with the democratic regime.

Key words: politics, participation, students, university, Czech Republic